



"A mislaid bit of Heaven"—Lake Louise

"Who's afraid?" cried Una. "I am going right down now to pick out a pony and to-morrow I am going as high and as far as I can go. I'll pick out ponies for you, too."

Una knows nothing of ponies, but she has plenty of confidence. Yet when she rejoined me later in our room her countenance was troubled.

"What," she asked, "does 'skookum' mean?"

"In what language?"

"Don't be silly. You've lived long enough in B.C. to know the meaning of a simple word like that."

"But it isn't a simple word," I protested. "It all depends on how it is used."

"It was used by a guide down there. A guide named Pedro; at least he should be named Pedro, for he's the most Pedro-like person I ever saw outside of a cigar box cover. He wears a beehive hat and a red handkerchief.

He wouldn't let me choose my pony, or yours either. There was a white one I wanted called Stovepipe, a dear thing, but Pedro said, 'No, too skookum!' What is 'skookum'?"

"Was he—er—was he looking at you or at the pony?"

"At me—I suppose. Why?"

Now Una is really sensitive about her weight. To tell her the real meaning of "skookum" would have been most unkind.

"Oh," I said briskly. "In that case 'skookum' means—er—dangerous. The guide means that you—I mean that Stovepipe was too dangerous for you."

Una looked relieved and I hastened to close the subject with, "He probably knows best."

Nevertheless, she glanced somewhat doubtfully at Pedro next morning as he mounted her upon a stout brown pony very different from Stovepipe, who was given to the nervous lady,